



Covenant Metropolitan Community Church

Rev. Marge Ragona
Pastor

November 5, 1998

Dear Members, Friends, and Regular Attendees:

Each year at this time Covenant looks at where it has been and where we want to go in the coming year.

This year, we continued our training for small group leaders and began to emphasize belonging to a small group. We began a greeters' group which will meet people at the door of the church, and help to make them feel comfortable. We are beginning a social concerns group, which will be made up of people who want to help the church move out in service to the community. The Growth Group and the Bible Study grew, along with the choir and the drama group. Choir and drama presentations continued to draw into our fellowship people who are not only interested in spiritual growth, but people who know how to have fun growing together.

In the community, we continued our support for BAO and other groups through our involvement in the Christmas box project, monthly contributions to AIDS agencies, the support of Agape House, the AIDS Walk. This year we became involved in Grace by Day which serves local people in the Woodlawn Community. This made us part of an ecumenical group of churches helping to feed and care for people in need in Woodlawn.

Our Parish extension in Gadsden has continued to grow, necessitating their move to a larger facility. Sylacauga has as many as 15 attending weekly Bible study. The Growth Group has often had 20 attending, and the weekly Bible study here in Birmingham often exceeds 20. With the choir and drama group, that means that nearly 150 people belong to some activity of the church other than Sunday worship.

Our associate pastor has been deeply involved in teaching the leaders of small groups and in gay community activities, particularly as part of the executive committee of Central Alabama Pride. Rev'd Richard Barham, our associate pastor, and Rev'd Greg Hardy, are both preparing to transfer their credentials to the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches (UFMCC). In addition, John Foust is in formation, preparing for the ministry. Meanwhile, we are training the interim pastoral leaders at Gadsden (Renee Carroll) and at Tuscaloosa (Susan Lowe) for ministry in UFMCC.

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For a large part of the year, we have had a paid custodian, a paid security guard, and a volunteer administrative assistant. The church phone has been answered by the pastor, through a system that rolls the call over to the pastor's home phone.

We have had some major expenses. Probably the one that impacted us most was the replacement of the roof on the sanctuary. That nearly wiped out our total savings, and cost us \$14,000. We face the cost of repainting the sanctuary and repairing the stairwell to the balcony this year.

We have gained nearly 25 members this year. For some time, we have had over 100 in the morning worship service and nearly always 60 in the evening service. While the pastor has preached the morning service, Rev'd Richard Barham and Deacon Cliff Tinney have carried the preaching responsibilities for most of the evening services, along with clergy in formation John Foust.

We are still having growing pains. We are growing faster than we can enlist leaders for our many programs, and that means reaching out to the new members to take additional leadership roles which can add to our and their growth.

It takes money to insure that something wonderful happens each Sunday to affect the spiritual life of our people. Our parent organization, UFMCC, now exists in 15 countries, and 10% of our tithes and offerings in turn are tithed to that program. Our district, Gulf-Lower Atlantic District, is the fastest growing district in UFMCC, and part of that is due to small groups like Tuscaloosa, Sylacauga, and Gadsden spreading out from established churches. We support the District with 5% of our income.

Are you willing to support a growing, maturing church with its roots in the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered community, but reaching out beyond there to the community at large. If you are, please sign your pledge card and return it to us in the envelope provided. Our current budget stands at \$8,476 a month. Pledge what you know God is asking you to pledge. That's always between you and God. The Christian ideal is 10% of your income. If you cannot make that commitment, pledge a percentage -- 5%, 3% -- that you know you will give. Your church needs to know what it can predictably spend in 1999, if it is going to continue to grow into the church for the new century.

A pledge card is provided. Please -- everyone -- fill it out and mail it to us or bring it to the church on November 15th. We will celebrate Pledge Day with our Thanksgiving potluck and hope everyone will be present. Your needs are important, and we try to meet them. Your support is equally important. Help us keep sharing the love of Christ with the people of our community here in Birmingham and all over the world.

In Christ's love,

Rev. Marge Ragona

Rev. Marge Ragona and

CMCC's Board of Directors

Covenant
Metropolitan Community Church
OFFERING HOPE • SHOWING FAITHFULNESS • SHARING JOY

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Pledge Card

Regular Budget (monthly) \$ _____

Building Mortgage Fund (monthly) \$ _____

- ☐ Member
☐ Friend
☐ Regular visitor

Covenant
Metropolitan Community Church
OFFERING HOPE • SHOWING FAITHFULNESS • SHARING JOY

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Pledge Card

Regular Budget (monthly) \$ _____

Building Mortgage Fund (monthly) \$ _____

- ☐ Member
☐ Friend
☐ Regular visitor

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Address _____
City _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Pledge Card

Regular Budget (monthly) \$ _____

Building Mortgage Fund (monthly) \$ _____

- ☐ Member
☐ Friend
☐ Regular visitor

Covenant
Metropolitan Community Church
OFFERING HOPE • SHOWING FAITHFULNESS • SHARING JOY

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Pledge Card

Regular Budget (monthly) \$ _____

Building Mortgage Fund (monthly) \$ _____

- ☐ Member
☐ Friend
☐ Regular visitor

120
 120
 120
 120

125

740

9
 2180 stamps

9 cups stamps

180 S

200 1.50 100 stamps



Covenant Metropolitan Community Church

Rev. Marge Ragona
Pastor

Dear Member, Friend, and Regular Attendee:

Each year at this time Covenant looks at where it has been and where we want to go in the coming year.

This year, our largest emphasis has been on small groups. We moved out into Gadsden and Sylacauga, providing the only gay Christian voice in those areas. The Growth Group and the Bible Study grew, along with the choir and the drama group. Choir and drama presentations introduced us to the community at large as people who are not only interested in spiritual growth, but people who know how to have fun growing together.

In the community, we continued our support for BAO and other groups through our involvement in the Christmas box project, monthly contributions to AIDS agencies, the support of Agape House, the AIDS Walk, and the Names Project quilt showing in Birmingham.

Our Parish extension in Gadsden has grown to over 40 committed individuals, with over 300 people already having come through their doors. Sylacauga has as many as 15 attending weekly Bible study. The Growth Group has 15-17 attending, and the weekly Bible study here in Birmingham often exceeds 20. With the choir and drama group, that means that nearly 150 people belong to some activity of the church other than Sunday worship.

We now have an associate pastor whose main task is in the area of small groups. These small groups not only meet the spiritual/social needs of our members but also provide growth for the church by bringing in new people, as well as helping keep older members involved and spiritually fed.

Two of our clergy candidates have gone on to ordination (Rev. Andy Mullins in Atlanta, and Greg Bullard in Memphis). Lee Rahe has applied for ordination. We now have two additional clergy candidates, Rev'd Greg Hardy at Gadsden and Rev'd Richard Barham, our associate here at Covenant, both preparing to transfer their credentials to the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches (UFMCC). In addition, John Foust is in formation, preparing for the ministry, and we will have a new person in formation after the first of the year.

For a large part of the year, we have had a paid custodian, a paid security guard, and a volunteer administrative assistant. We are realizing that we need new ways to get the church phone answered by a live person, rather than just the answering machine.

We are still having growing pains and some losses. We lost over 20 important members to moves out of the area. While some have been replaced by new members, these losses have seriously impacted our budget. The downsizing of businesses have also affected us, leaving some of our long-term members unemployed or with reduced incomes. Still, nearly 100 people (sometimes more) worship each Sunday morning and nearly 60 come out at night. We are larger than some of the established mainline churches in Woodlawn, churches which have been in this area for a hundred years.

It takes money to insure that something wonderful happens each Sunday to affect the spiritual life of our people. Our parent organization, UFMCC, now exists in 15 countries, and 10% of our tithes and offerings in turn are tithed to that program. Our district, Gulf-Lower Atlantic District, is the fastest growing district in UFMCC, and part of that is due to small groups like Tuscaloosa and Gadsden spreading out from established churches.

We have been chartered! October 26th, Covenant became a chartered church in UFMCC, the final stage of growth and stability for an MCC church. We are no longer as carefully supervised by the District, but are expected to take our place in leadership in the Fellowship.

Are you willing to support a growing, maturing church with its roots in the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered community, but reaching out beyond there to the community at large. If you are, please sign your pledge card and return it to us in the envelope provided. Our current budget stands at \$9300 a month. Pledge what you know God is asking you to pledge. That's always between you and God. The Christian ideal is 10% of your income. If you cannot make that commitment, pledge a percentage -- 5%, 3% -- that you know you will give. Your church needs to know what it can predictably spend in 1998, if it is going to continue to grow into the church for the new century.

A pledge card is provided. Please -- everyone -- fill it out and mail it to us or bring it to the church on November 23rd. We will celebrate Pledge Day with our Thanksgiving potluck and hope everyone will be present. Your needs are important, and we try to meet them. Your support is equally important. Help us keep sharing the love of Christ with the people of our community here in Birmingham and all over the world.

In Christ's love,

Rev. Marge Ragona

November 1, 1996

Dear Member, Friend or Regular Attender

Each year at this time Covenant looks at where it has been the previous year and where we want to go in the coming year.

Does it really seem possible that it was only in 1996 that we dedicated the building and began paying a mortgage? That was the big campaign for this year and we accomplished it. Some other things took on less emphasis because of the building. For one thing, the many AIDS agencies that we support -- 1917 Clinic, Birmingham Aids Outreach, Agape House -- were not given as much emphasis this year. We did not collect food for the pantry at BAO, for example, and we need to get back to doing that. We also need to make sure that our monthly contributions go to those agencies on a regular basis, not just when we have something extra to spend.

Two years ago, we moved out into Tuscaloosa and formed a parish extension there, giving attention and support to that effort. This year, we moved out into East Alabama, with groups forming in the Anniston-Lincoln-Pell City area and in Gadsden. With the end of this year, Tuscaloosa will become a New Work -- a category in MCC that allows it to begin to function on its own and grow independently. In 1997, we hope to do the same for Gadsden.

Plans for the coming year include putting an assistant pastor on staff, both for someone to preach the evening service and for administrative duties. We are also growing enough to need a church administrative assistant to take routine duties away from the pastor and from various board members and deacons, to allow them to do more work directly with the congregation.

We are having growing pains! And that's a wonderful thing to have. Most of our morning services now have more than 100 people attending -- something that would not have been possible without the new building. Our evening services have more than 60 attending. Nearly 100 people attend a Bible study or healing group in the course of a week, either here in Birmingham or in one of the outlying areas. We need to form other groups, for example, in Sylacauga where a significant group of people from our congregation live and where there is a major need for a gay Christian voice. The variety of small groups require coordination, and our administrative assistant would have duties in that area.

Taking care of a building means having someone to oversee its cleanliness and to keep track of what needs doing. We need a paid janitor/custodian at least part time.

All of this means money. We are doing God's work in our community -- taking care of our own people, reaching out and healing and educating them in the Christian life, helping take care of people living with HIV/AIDS, and many, many other things that a church does. Someone once asked if anyone would want to live in a place where there wasn't a church. I know I would not want to live in a gay community where there wasn't a church. That's what Metropolitan Community Churches are all about, being the church in our own community.

We decided a long time ago that God meant for MCC to exist and to grow. Our growth has been phenomenal for any denomination. We are world-wide now, and I don't think we ever expected to be this large or this widespread. But we are. Part of our tithes and offerings support that world wide spread of what can only be good news to the hearers.

Do you want to support this kind of church? Do you want to support God's work here at home in the Birmingham gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered community? Do you want to reach out to friendly non-gay people in other churches and in our own? Do you want to have a monthly (or even daily) impact on the lives of people living with HIV/ AIDS? Do you want to help start gay Christian groups all over central Alabama? You can by your weekly tithe or offering to Covenant Metropolitan Community Church. The attached budget shows exactly where the money will go in the coming year. Some of it will support infrastructure, some of it will go for outreach, some of it will go back into the community, and some of it will go to the Fellowship for world-wide growth.

Pledge what you know God is asking you to pledge. The Christian ideal is the tithe - ten percent. If you are not ready to make that commitment, pledge a percentage of your income that you can commit to -- 2%, 5% or whatever you know you will give. Your church needs you. Your church needs to know what it can predictably spend in the coming year. We do not want to be like the Biblical person who started to build a tower and ran out of money. We need to be able to predict our income, so that we can plan our expenditures. Your pledge is an important part of our yearly planning.

A pledge card is enclosed. Please -- everyone -- fill it out and mail it to us in the envelope provided, or bring it to church November 24th. We will celebrate Pledge Day with a potluck and hope everyone will be present. Your needs are important, your support is equally important. Help us share the love of Jesus Christ with our people both at home and all over the world.

In Christ's love,

Rev. Marge Ragona

Covenant
Metropolitan Community Church
OFFERING HOPE • SHOWING FAITHFULNESS • SHARING JOY

Pledge Card 1998

Regular Budget (monthly) \$ _____

Building Mortgage Fund (monthly) \$ _____

Name _____

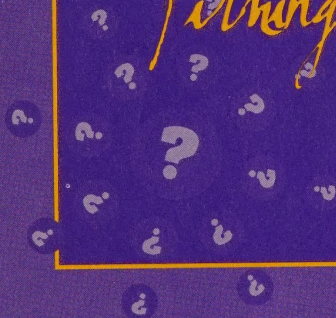
Address _____

City _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

- ☐ Member
- ☐ Friend
- ☐ Regular visitor

10

*Common
Questions
About
Fasting*



1

What is a tithe?

The word *tithe* means one tenth of a whole. As early as four hundred years before the Law was given, tithing is mentioned in the Bible. In Genesis 14 we see Abram returning from a battle in great victory. As he returned, the priestly representative of God, Melchizedek, blessed him. Abram responded by giving a tenth (tithe) of all that he had.

There are several Scriptures in the Old Testament that refer to the tithe. Two that are often quoted are Leviticus 27:30 and Malachi 3:10.

The word *tithe* is also found in the New Testament. In Matthew 23:23 and Luke 11:42 Jesus indicated to the Pharisees that they should tithe.

2

Does tithing apply today?

In response to all that God the Great Giver has provided for us, our giving should be a significant amount. Ten percent of your income is a meaningful amount to give. The Bible upholds a standard for giving. That standard is the tithe. Christians should practice regular, faithful giving.

3

Do I tithe on my total salary or on my take-home pay?

This question goes right to the heart of how we feel about God and our motivation. The

Bible does not answer this question directly, but it does tell us that “the earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it” (Ps. 24:1, NIV). If we accept this truth, we will want to give as much as possible to God. Then, this question will no longer seem important.

4

Do I pay my bills first or give my tithe?

This question raises the issue of priority. Right priorities can be established by following the management principles found in the Bible. God is first. By practicing good Christian money management principles, you will have a plan for giving your tithe, saving for your future, and providing living expenses.

5

Does my service for God at church count as my tithe?

We are called to be stewards of our lives, our influence, and our resources. Stewardship in one area cannot replace stewardship expected in another area. To give time and not give money is to be disobedient in finances.

6

Where am I to give my tithe?

The Bible says “to seek the place the Lord your God will choose....To that place you must go...bring your...offerings...,sacrifices...,tithes and special gifts. (Deut. 12:5-6, NIV).

Your church provides Christian worship,

discipleship, and ministry. Your church should have first priority for your giving.

7

Should I designate my tithe for some specific area of ministry?

Following the biblical model, firstfruits and tithes were given to God for use by the Levites in maintaining worship and temple functions. For the Christian church, people are elected to seek God's will, budget for total mission and ministries, and administer members' gifts as approved by the whole congregation. Gifts are used for the greatest growth of kingdom work. If tithes are designated by members, many mission and ministry needs may be overlooked.

8

What is the difference between a tithe and an offering?

A tithe, as mentioned earlier, is ten percent of income. In the Old Testament, several different offerings were regularly given in addition to the tithe and were often mentioned together (Mal. 3:8). In the New Testament, Paul wrote that offerings should be based on God's blessings.

9

Do I start with a tenth or do I work up to a tenth?

When the Jews did not give their tithes, as required by the Law, they were labeled robbers: "Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. But you ask, 'How do we rob you?' In tithes and offerings" (Mal. 3:8, NIV). We must, therefore,

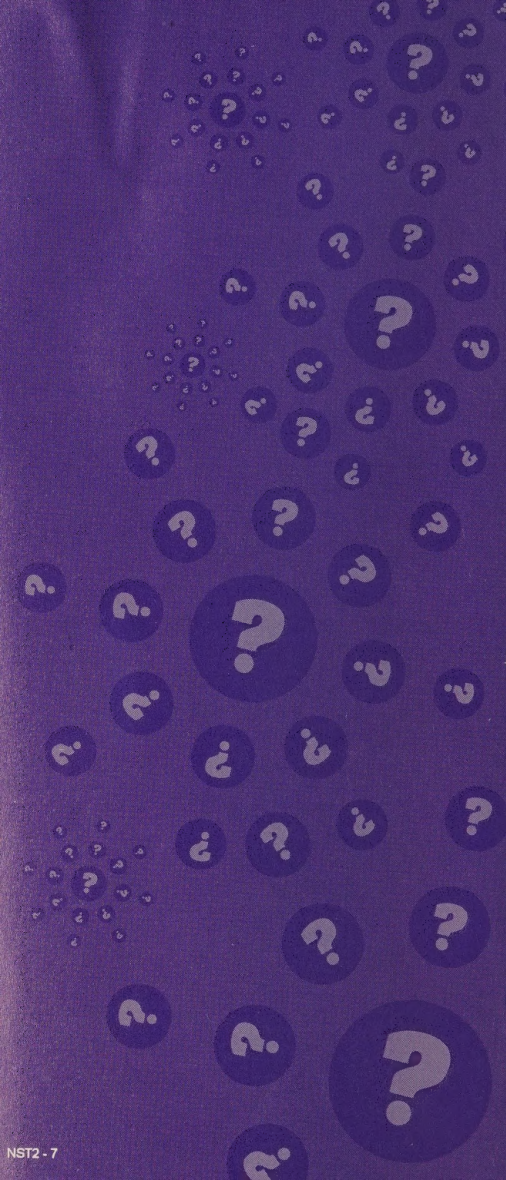
10

Why tithe?

- God uses the tithes and offerings of His people to carry out His work here on earth.
- God owns everything on earth, including all we have control over. Giving our tithes each Sunday reminds us of who owns everything!
- Tithing helps us to honor God and grow spiritually.

A church asked a next door store owner if the church could use his parking lot on Sundays. He agreed with one stipulation: "One Sunday each year I'll put up chains to block off the parking lot so you don't forget who owns it."

God promises to bless those who tithe. "*Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,*" says the Lord Almighty, *'and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it'*" (Mal. 3:10, NIV).





October 17, 1997

Dear Friend,

As a church family, we are preparing to make our commitments to the 1998 Ministry Budget of \$4,271,607. Led by the message of our stewardship theme *Touching the World*, the Finance Committee encourages you to reflect upon the impact that your gifts have in reaching and providing for people through our ministries.

The principles of giving to God First and Tithing are clearly taught in the scriptures. Malachi 3:10 instructs us to "bring all the tithes into the storehouse...and God will pour out a blessing so great we won't have room enough to take it in." A tithe is 10% of one's income. You are encouraged to give a tithe or more, or to begin a systematic plan of working toward God's standard.

Please pray and seek God's guidance for you and for your family in your commitment. Pray that God will guide each of us to set goals that require trusting in God for the results.

Pledge Cards will be mailed on Thursday, October 23. On Pledge Day Sunday, November 2, at the beginning of Sunday School we will join hearts and hands as a church family in giving through a Pledge March in the Sanctuary at 9:45. If you will be absent on Pledge Day, you may mail your Pledge Cards in or drop them off at the church office.

At Dawson Memorial Baptist Church throughout the next two weeks, the emphasis will be on *Touching the World*. Each member should think about not only "what Christ has done for me," but also about "what I can do for Christ throughout His church and the world."

Sincerely,

Larry Newman
Chairman, Finance Committee

LN/ba
Enclosure

My
Prayer
Guide
for



October 27 -
November 2, 1997

Dawson Memorial Baptist Church
1114 Oxmoor Road
Birmingham, Alabama 35209

Monday, October 27, 1997

Read today's scripture verse:

Psalms 24

God is the creator and owner of all things.

Pray for God's material blessings in your life to be brought to your mind.

List your Prayer Requests for today:

Tuesday, October 28, 1997

Read today's scripture verse:

2 Corinthians 9:12-15

Man is a steward, a manager, and is entrusted by God with special responsibilities.

Pray for the people in your life whom you can impact for Jesus Christ.

List your Prayer Requests for today:

Wednesday, October 29, 1997

Read today's scripture verse:

2 Corinthians 9:7-8

Stewardship is more than an activity; it is a way of living.

Make a list and pray for the particular activities\ministries of Dawson you are involved in.

List activities\ministries:

List your Prayer Requests for today:

Thursday, October 30, 1997

Read today's scripture verse:

Nehemiah 10:37-39

Material things are to be used for the glory of God and the good of people.

Pray for an intense desire to grow spiritually.

List your Prayer Requests for today:

Friday, October 31, 1997

Read today's scripture verse:

Luke 6:38

Christian giving is a grace to be developed.

Pray that the Holy Spirit will prompt you to pledge sacrificially to the 1998 Ministry Budget on Pledge Day, Sunday, November 2. Our 1998 Ministry Budget is \$4,271,607.

List your Prayer Requests for today:

Saturday, November 1, 1997

Read today's scripture verse:

2 Corinthians 8:1-9

A growing commitment to Christ is the key to faithful stewardship.

Pray for God to reveal how you can make an over and above gift to our **Pledge Day Offering**. The first \$144,000 will support:

- Woodlawn Partnership
- Benevolence
- World Changers for our Youth
- Hong Kong Baptist University
- Preschool Renovations

The balance of our offering on Pledge Day will support the 1997 Ministry Budget.

List your Prayer Requests for today:

Sunday, November 2, 1997

Pledge Day

Read today's scripture verse:

Matthew 28:19-20

We are commissioned to carry the gospel to all the world.

Pray that God's people will respond to the needs of people by making a pledge to the 1998 Ministry Budget of \$4,271,607.

List your Prayer Requests for today:

Today's schedule:

- 8:30 a.m. Worship
- 9:45 a.m. Pledge March in the Sanctuary
Bible Study should begin
by 10:05 a.m.
- 11:00 a.m. Worship
- 6:30 p.m. Worship – Concert by Proclaim

What do I do with my Pledge Cards?

- 1. Have a family conference** and discuss how to make a pledge. Let each family member fill out his\her own Pledge Card.
- 2. Write in the amount** of your commitment.
- 3. Check one of the options** for 10% of your Cooperative Missions portion of your offering.
- 4. Participate in the Pledge March** at 9:45 a.m. in the Sanctuary, when the entire church family meets together and places their Pledge Cards and children's banks in the church replicas. This will be a family worship time, all babies and children are encouraged to come. Bible Study will follow this Pledge Service at 10:05 a.m.



Pledge Day, November 2

Options for Cooperative Missions Support

Please fill out the amount you plan to give for January 1–December 31, 1998 on the enclosed Pledge Card and choose an options for 10% of your Cooperative Missions portion of your offering.

Here are the options:

OPTION A:

Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program

57.7% of this money goes to Alabama Baptist State Convention for Missions causes.

42.3% of this money goes to the Cooperataive Program and is allocated as follows:

- North American, International
Mission Boards 73.56%
- Six Seminaries 20.64%
- Christian Life (Ethics) 0.99%
- SBC Operations 4.82%

OPTION B:

Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Vision

57.7% of this money goes to Alabama Baptist State Convention for Missions causes.

42.3% of this money goes to CBF Vision and is allocated as follows:

- World Missions 61.2%
- Theological Education 10.6%
- Cooperative Ventures 6.8%
- General & Administrative 5.6%
- Communications 5.1%
- General Assembly 4.8%
- Other items 5.9%

If no option is selected, Option A will automatically be used.

Be sure to fill out a Pledge Card for every member of your family.

Here's what to do on Pledge Day, November 2

- Everyone meets in the Sanctuary for this service instead of going to Sunday School rooms at 9:30 a.m.
 - Parents of preschoolers may pick up their children at the conclusion of the early worship service from their Worship Care Room.
 - Families are encouraged to bring their children's Pledge Day bank. A piece of tape across the bank's opening will help prevent the loss of coins.
 - This is a family worship time, all babies and children are encouraged to be a part.
-
- The Pledge Service begins at 9:45 a.m. and will include music, a word from our Pastor, and the Pledge March.
 - The Pledge March is a time when individuals and families come forward to place their commitment cards (and Pledge Day Banks) in the church replicas. Following the Pledge March, proceed to Sunday School classes for Bible Study.
 - Sunday School Bible Study will begin at approximately 10:05 a.m.
 - We will have our regular worship services at 8:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m., and 6:30 p.m.

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____ Phone _____

City _____, AL ZIP _____

OFFERING
ENV. NO.

AMOUNT:

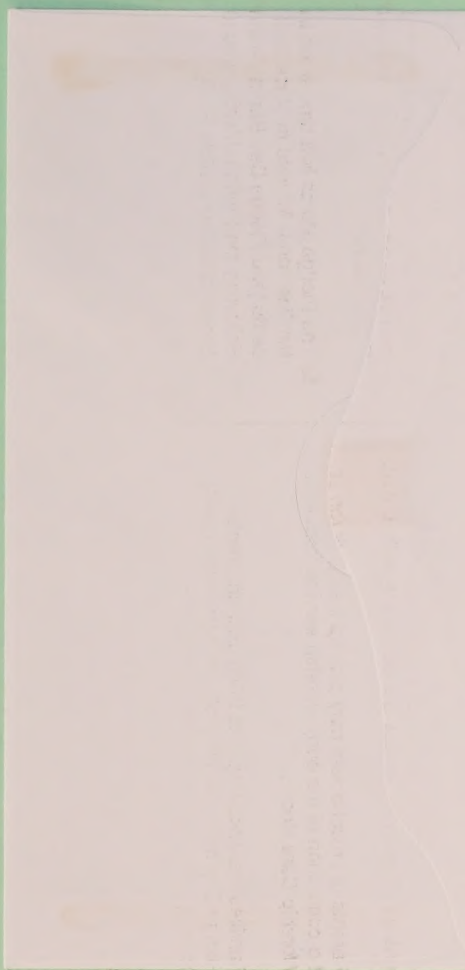
\$ _____

1998 Pledge Day Offering

- \$48,000 Woodlawn Partnership
- \$26,000 Local Benevolence
- \$16,000 Youth World Changers
(repair houses for the needy)
- \$4,000 Hong Kong Baptist University
- \$50,000 Preschool Renovations



Pledge Day November 2





959-01.
Mr Allan R Francis
P.O. Box 55532
Birmingham, AL 35255-5975

Dawson Memorial Baptist Church 1998 Tithe/Pledge Card

My tithe for the year beginning January 1998 \$ _____
or
My pledge for the year beginning January 1998 \$ _____

I want the cooperative missions portion (10%) of my budget offering to be allocated as follows:

- ☐ Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program
☐ Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Vision Program

Sunday School Dept. \$ 550 Class \$ 14 Visit Area \$ 22

Home Telephone 933-6627 MY

Signed _____

This pledge may be changed anytime by notifying the church office.



October 23, 1997

Dear Friend,

On Sunday, November 2, our *Touching the World* stewardship campaign culminates in Pledge Day. Throughout our stewardship emphasis, we have explored various aspects and stages of giving. Giving is a natural response to God's love. Our giving not only spreads His love to others, but also allows us to experience a personal joy and communion with God.

Our church works within a budget and planning helps us to make wise use of our resources. The spiritual and financial decision you and others make will determine our church's ministry opportunities in 1998.

The Pledge Card you fill out and turn in during the Pledge March at 9:45 in the Sanctuary on Sunday, November 2, expresses your response to the grace and goodness of God in your life. This is no small decision and we urge you to approach it with prayer and thought and let God lead you. This will be an exciting time for all our church family. We want all children to participate in our Pledge March.

The offering on Pledge Day is very important. The first \$144,000 will be used for mission projects that involve our own people reaching out to others and for improvement of the facilities for our youngest children. The balance of our offering will be used to support the ongoing 1997 ministries through December 31.

We have designated October 27-November 2 as a Week of Prayer for Pledge Day. A Prayer Guide is enclosed for you to use as you pray daily for Sunday, November 2.

Please bring the enclosed Pledge Card(s) with you to the Sanctuary on November 2. If you are unable to attend, please mail your Pledge Card(s) to the church office so we receive it by Friday, October 31.

Let's all join together for a great day for our church as we worship God.

Sincerely,

Larry Newman
Chairman, Finance Committee

LN/ba
Enclosure

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26, 1997

Dawson Memorial Baptist Church
1114 Oxmoor Road, Birmingham, Alabama 35209

TOGETHER



*T*he world around us abounds with those who do not know Jesus Christ. Who have not heard the Good News. And who long for peace and desire hope. We, at Dawson, seek to follow our Lord's direction and minister to others throughout the world. We do this in a number of ways—our words and witness, our actions and attitudes, our service and stewardship.

In today's emphasis, *Touching the World*, presenters through a series of verbal testimonies during Sunday School and worship, will offer insights into what they have learned from God about personal stewardship.

Next Sunday, November 2, we will have an opportunity to obey the Lord through our stewardship. Pledge Day will be the pinnacle of our *Touching the World* stewardship emphasis. Each one of us will have the chance to make our personal commitments on this day.

Begin preparing now through Bible study and prayer for this important day, and ask the Lord to direct your path as you consider your part in *Touching the World*.

Baby of the Week

Daniel Carson Powers, son of John and Catherine Powers is our Baby of the Week. He was born June 11, 1997, and will participate with his family in dedication this Sunday during the 11:00 a.m. Worship Service. His grandparents are Mary Jo Carson, Carl and Pat Carson of Birmingham, Alabama, and Danny and Kaye Powers of Dothan, Alabama.

Hospitalized (10/20/97)

Brookwood: **Mr. Wendell Harris**,

Mr. Scott Sides

BMC-Princeton:

Mrs. Mildred McCullough

Health South: **Rev. Ed Tharpe**

Love and Sympathy to . . .

Brad and Dana Judy in the death of Dana's grandmother, and **Gary and Jeanae Freeman** in the death of Jeanae's grandmother; **Henry and Irene Hoffman** in the death of Irene's sister, and **Dennis and Sydney Hoffman** in the death of Dennis' aunt; **Bob and Peggy Storey** in the death of their grandson; **Clarence and Polly Bracher** in the death of Polly's sister; **Mrs. Estelle Byrd** in the death of her sister; **David and Carol Koon** in the death of Carol's mother.

Memorial Flowers

The beautiful flowers in the Sanctuary this Sunday were placed there in loving memory of **Frank and Alice Ward Hughes** by their daughter, Alice Hughes Michael and grandson, Trey Anderson.

All Youth Retreat

November 8 - 9

For all 7th - 12th graders

Cost: \$15

Leave Saturday, November 8

Return Sunday, November 9 noon.

Sign up by Sunday, November 2

Welcome to Dawson

Mr. Enrique Herrera, 4400 Bessemer Super Hwy., Bessemer, 35020

Ms. Karmin Nicole Arnold, 2123 Ski Lodge III, Birmingham, 35209

Senior Adult Activities:

(in Fellowship Hall, unless otherwise noted)

Men's Breakfast Club—Tuesday, October 28, 7:30 a.m.

WIC S Club (Widows/Widowers In Christian Service)—Friday, November 7, 12:00 noon. Program: Juanita Tant, Arlington House

80+Munch and Brunch—November 13, 12:00 Noon Fellowship Meal

TEL Bible Study—Mondays, 1:00 p.m. Room 252-A North

Dawsonaires (Week Day Ministry Choir)—Thursdays, 9:30 a.m. Choir Room

Body Tune Up—Every Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, 8:30 a.m. Christian Life Center

TRAVEL:

- JOY Club to Space Museum, Huntsville, November 15

Homebound Birthdays

Mrs. Evelyn Gammill (Nov. 17)
Fair Haven Retirement Center
1424 Montclair Rd., Room 178W
Birmingham, AL 35210-2295

Mrs. Christine Greenwood (Nov. 17)
Hillhaven Nursing Home, Room 305
2728 10th Avenue South
Birmingham, AL 35205-1297

Mrs. Berniece Hackworth (Nov. 25)
314 Mecca Avenue
Birmingham, AL 35209-3462

Mrs. Inez Lawrence (Nov. 25)
300 Royal Towers Drive, #304
Birmingham, AL 35209-6816

Mrs. Nellie Mae Young (Nov. 25)
4909 Indian Valley Rd.
Birmingham, AL 35244-2232

Missions Bible Study

Tuesday, October 28, 9:30 a.m.
Christian Life Center
Margaret Gibson, teacher



Pledge Day November 2



Dawson has many opportunities to touch the world through ministry and missions, witness and worship. This year's stewardship emphasis calls us to recognize how God uses the faithfulness of His people to touch the world. *Touching the World* requires us to be faithful in our giving as individuals and as families. The 1998 Ministry Budget, which totals \$4,271,607, provides financial support for everything we will do through ministry in 1998.

Begin now to prepare for *Touching the World* as we move toward another tremendous expression of our commitment next Sunday, November 2, on Pledge Day, and make a sacrificial gift to the Pledge Day special offering. The first \$144,000 given on Pledge Day will support:

▶ **Woodlawn Partnership \$48,000**

Dawson will continue this new partnership we have established with the Birmingham Baptist Association to program ministry through the Baptist Center under the leadership of Sammy Campbell our Minister to Local Missions.

▶ **Benevolence \$26,000**

We receive requests year around for help with utility bills and from people needing food. These funds will be used to help needy people. Each recipient is interviewed and ministered to by Dawson's staff or lay people.

▶ **World Changers \$16,000**

Youth teams will repair low-income homes through this ministry.

▶ **Hong Kong Baptist University \$4,000**

These funds will be used to partner with other churches in the Birmingham Baptist Association to set up an endowment for six students to study abroad for one semester at the University. This is the only Christian university in China.

▶ **Preschool Renovations \$50,000**

New flooring and painting of classrooms will be done throughout our preschool areas.

Contributions received over and above \$144,000 will support the present ministries through the 1997 Ministry Budget.

What happens on Pledge Day, Sunday, November 2?

Next Sunday, November 2, everyone should go to the Sanctuary at 9:45 am for the Pledge March. After we place our Pledge Cards and our special Pledge Day offering in the receptacles, we will go to Sunday School. All Bible study classes should begin by 10:05 am. We will have our regular worship services at 8:30 am, 11:00 am and 6:30 pm.



At Dawson's
Christian Life
Center

Friday, October 31, 6:00–9:00 p.m.
(7:30 p.m. costume walk)

Dress in happy costumes and plan to be a part of the annual costume walk. Come hungry and plan to eat—there will be plenty of food for all!

Cost: 25¢ for food tickets, games are free

This Sunday, October 26

Sunday School Leadership Meetings tonight, 5:00 p.m.

- Preschool leaders (4:30 p.m.) 144 East
- Children/Preteen leaders 323 East
- Youth leaders 241 East
- Single Adult leaders 221 East
- Newly Married Division 252A North
- Adult A 252B North
- Adult B 253 North
- Adult C-D 254 North

Adult teachers, directors, secretaries, outreach and care facilitators meet with Division Coordinators to discuss schedules and dates of upcoming events. All leaders are encouraged to complete and return "Potential Leaders" cards.

Woodlawn Ministry

"Birthday Party for Jesus"

Saturday, December 13,
9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

South Avondale Baptist Church.

If you can help,
call Sammy Campbell, 871-7324.

"Proclaim" to sing at Dawson Sunday evening, November 2

"Proclaim" is an exciting vocal ensemble composed of four outstanding young men. This talented quartet has performed throughout the southeast in churches and on college campuses. This summer they won first place in vocal competition in the 1997 National Christian Artists Seminar in Estes Park, Colorado. They have recently released an outstanding recording, and their recognition among Christian performers is growing rapidly.

"Proclaim" has a distinct acapella style which blends gospel and contemporary sounds. Their music is refreshing and their message is inspirational. Invite a friend to share in this wonderful time of worship this Sunday at 6:30 p.m.



• **Metro Changers**, Saturday, November 1, meet at Christian Life Center at 8:00 a.m. For more information call Richard Fitch, 871-7324.

• **Singles Lunch**, Sunday, November 9, Christian Life Center. Sign up in Singles areas. Cost: \$3.00

• **Singles Sunday Nights**, 6:30, in the Chapel

SUMMER MOTHER'S DAY OUT—Our church members may place their child(ren) on a waiting list for our Preschool Summer Mother's Day Out Program. Mother's Day Out meets each Friday from 9:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m. If you are interested in our Summer only MDO Program, please call Louise Sellers in the church office (871-7324).

THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR

Sunday, October 26

8:30 A.M. Morning Worship Service
 9:30 A.M. Divorce Recovery Classes/HMS
 9:45 A.M. Sunday School
 11:00 A.M. Morning Worship Service
 11:00 A.M. Hispanic Worship/Chapel
 4:00 P.M. Dawson Singers/227E
 4:00 P.M. Treble Chorus/353N
 4:30 P.M. Grief Support Group/106W
 4:30 P.M. Middle School Bells/357N
 4:30 P.M. Happy Singers/209W
 4:30 P.M. Preschool Sunday School leaders/
 144E

5:00 P.M. Sunday School Leadership Meetings
 5:00 P.M. Chapel Choir
 5:30 P.M. New Voice (7th-8th gr. choir)/355N
 6:00 P.M. "Cross Training" /323E
 6:30 P.M. Arabic Worship Service/100W
 6:30 P.M. Evening Worship
 8:00 P.M. Al-Anon Meeting/1119 Oxmoor Rd.

Monday, October 27

11:30 A.M. Weighdown Workshop/CLC
 1:00 P.M. T.E.L. Adult Bible Study/252-A North
 3:00 P.M. G.A.P./252-A North
 5:30 P.M. Chapel Handbells/357N
 6:00 P.M. Singles Outreach

Tuesday, October 28

6:40 A.M. Pastor's Prayer Meeting/Chapel
 8:30 A.M. Senior Adult Men's Breakfast/FH
 9:30 A.M. Missions Bible Study/CLC
 6:15 P.M. Master Ringers/357N
 6:30 P.M. Conversational English/101W
 7:00 P.M. AA Meeting/1119 Oxmoor Rd.

Wednesday, October 29

9:00 A.M. Women's Bible Studies/North Bldg.
 4:45 P.M. Family Dinner/Fellowship Hall

MENU: Hamburger Steak, Fish Nuggets,
 Baked Chicken, Macaroni/Cheese, Green
 beans, Rice/Gravy, Broccoli/Cheese
 Sauce, French Fries, Salads, Desserts,
 Rolls (Adults, \$3.50, Students, \$2.50,
 Children, \$1.50)

5:30 P.M. Young Men on Mission/240E
 5:45 P.M. "A Heart Like His"/252-A North
 5:45 P.M. Choirs for 4 & 5 year olds
 5:45 P.M. Choirs for 1-6 graders
 6:00 P.M. One-to-One Discipleship/251, 256N
 6:00 P.M. Preschool Parents' Bible Study/254N
 6:00 P.M. Preschool Mission Friends
 6:15 P.M. Orchestra/Sanctuary
 6:15 P.M. Evening Handbells/357N
 6:30 P.M. Prayer Meeting/Chapel
 6:30 P.M. Connection Contemporary Worship/
 CLC
 6:30 P.M. Good Stuf (Grades 7-12)/CLC
 6:30 P.M. Ministry Skills/250N
 6:45 P.M. Missions for 1st-6th graders
 6:45 P.M. Mission Friends (ages 2½-5)

7:30 P.M. What's Next? Bible Study/CLC

7:30 P.M. Safe People Bible Study/CLC

7:30 P.M. Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal/Choir Room

Thursday, October 30

9:30 A.M. Dawsonaires/Choir Room

6:30 P.M. "A Heart Like His" Bible Study/253N

Friday, October 31

8:00 A.M. Mother's Day Out

6:30 P.M. Fall Festival of Fun/CLC



Preregistration is
 requested.

Phone: 879-1758

CREATIVE MEMORIES—Wednesday, 10/
 29, 9-12 noon (Nursery reservations due 10/
 22); Friday, November 7, 6- 10 p.m.

MYSTERY LUNCH BUNCH will go to a
 mystery location somewhere in our area for a
 time of fun and fellowship. Wednesday, No-
 vember 5, 10:00 a.m. Cost: \$12.00

HIGH HOOPS REGISTRATION is open
 through October 30. League play begins Satur-
 day, January 3, 1998. Practices will begin in
 November. Cost: \$20 youth sized jersey and
 \$25 adult sized jersey. Bring registration form
 and payment to the Christian Life Center.

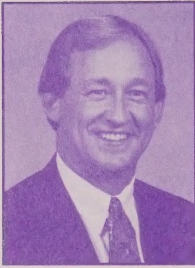
INTRODUCTION TO COMPUTER—a
 hands-on class Tuesday and Thursday, No-
 vember 11 & 13, 6:30; Instructor: Don Ehrett

CHEAHA WILDERNESS—Join the Outback
 Pack for a great adventure November 7 - 9. Call
 the CLC for more details.

Christmas Crafts:

BAG-A-BOND CONFETTI WREATH,
 made from layered fabric, brown paper bag
 squares, giant jingle bells, and coordinating
 bow, will enhance your holiday decorating.
 Tuesday, November 4, 7:00 p.m., Cost: \$10.00.
 Instructor: Leigh Moore

CHEERY FELT CHARMERS beckon holi-
 day guests to warm themselves near the fire.
 Stuffed with fiber-fill, these felt ornaments will
 be a one of a kind. Great teacher gifts! Thurs-
 day, November 6, 7:00 p.m., Cost: \$5.00,
 Instructor: Chris Coombs



GARY FENTON

“May Be the Most Important Week”

“This week may be the most important week of your year and possibly your life. Because the little decisions you make in the next week will impact you and others for years to come.” A college administrator said this during an orientation session in my first week

on campus as a freshman. He told us that many of us would never break the study habits we established that first week. These habits would impact the kind of students we would be, the type of job we would have, as well influence the quality of life we would be able to provide for our families.

To be honest, I don’t remember hearing that statement, but in my first week of class an English professor reminded us of that statement and required us to write a two page essay about what we thought it meant and how it applied to our life. I remember in my essay I wrote that I felt that it was an exaggeration and just an attempt to intimidate us into studying. In addition to giving me a low grade for a paper filled with grammatical errors, my professor added insult to injury. She wrote a note at the end of the paper indicating she felt my approach was immature. From the perspective of 32 years, both the administrator and the professor were right. A sign of maturity is recognizing the consequences and results of our actions.

This next week each Dawson family will be making decisions that will impact our members, our community and people throughout the world. THIS IS PLEDGE WEEK AT DAWSON, and we will make our Pledges and sacrificial gifts on Sunday, November 2. We will be determining how much we will be giving to the Lord’s work through our church. What you and I pledge and give will impact the lives of people throughout the world.

1. Every week we have between 2,500 to 4,000 people on our church campus for Sunday morning Bible study, seven worship services (three on Sunday, two on Wednesday evenings, two language services), weekday Bible studies, and support groups. This does not include the thousands we touch through television ministry.
2. Each year over 75 couples receive some type of premarriage help through Dawson and many married couples receive counseling through our Good Samaritan Counseling Ministry.
3. We will send over 50 youth to low-income areas to help repair homes.
4. We will support over 6,000 foreign and home missionaries through Cooperative missions.

These are just a few things that will result from the choices we make regarding our stewardship decisions this week. Be praying about your pledge and your special Pledge Day gift. Ask God to help you to:

1. Pledge and give based on faith and not your comfort level.
2. To help you tithe (give 10% of your income to the Lord’s work).
3. Be a good steward of all your possessions, time, and talents.

Your Pastor,
Gary Fenton

READ THE BIBLE

October 25-31

25 Isaiah 39,40	Philippians 4
26 Isaiah 41,42	Colossians 1
27 Isaiah 43,44	Colossians 2
28 Isaiah 45,46,47	Colossians 3
29 Isaiah 48,49	Colossians 4
30 Isaiah 50,51,52	I Thessalonians 1
30 Isaiah 53,54,55	I Thessalonians 2
31 Isaiah 56,57,58	I Thessalonians 3



Fall back!

Remember to set your clocks back one hour before you go to bed Saturday night, October 25.

Pastor's Prayer Meeting

Every Tuesday morning,
6:40-7:20, in the Chapel.

F.A.Q.*

*Frequently Asked Questions
about Dual Sunday Schools

What is the schedule for dual Sunday Schools?

8:15 a.m.	Early Sunday School
9:30 a.m.	Early Worship
	Late Sunday School
11:00 a.m.	Late Worship

Dual Sunday Schools will begin August 23, 1998. We explored many schedules before arriving at the above times. Families said they preferred earlier times for Sunday School.

Since most people in the community assume Dawson's worship service is at 11:00 a.m., we felt it is best to leave this service at its traditional time in order to reach more people for Christ.



Dawson Memorial Baptist Church
1114 Oxmoor Road, Birmingham, Alabama 35209
(205) 871-7324 • Prayer Line: (205) 879-2254
<http://www.dawsonmemorial.org>
E-mail: dawsonmemorial@compuserve.com

Gary Fenton, Pastor

Together

TOGETHER (USPS No. 149-460) is published weekly by Dawson Memorial Baptist Church, 1114 Oxmoor Road, Birmingham, Alabama, 35209. Periodicals postage paid at Birmingham, Alabama.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to TOGETHER, 1114 Oxmoor Road, Birmingham, Alabama 35209.
Vol. 49, No. 43, Sunday, October 26, 1997

M

Mr. Allan R. Francis
P.O. Box 55532
Birmingham AL 35255-5975

Parking spaces are available Sunday mornings at Mizerany Realty
and Homewood Middle School.

ORDER of WORSHIP

Sunday, October 26, 1997, 8:30 and 11:00 a.m.

Preparation for Worship

Prelude: "When Morning Gilds the Skies" arr. Calyon

Hymn No.202: "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name" CORONATION

The Invocation 8:30, Kinn Webb; 11:00; Brian George

Solo Leigh Sherer

"Touching the World" Emphasis

Chorus: "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands"

Scripture Reading: Romans 14:17

Hymn No. 296: "Jesus Is Lord of All" LORDSHIP OF CHRIST

Prayer

Choral Worship: "O Worship the King" arr. Hayes

Sanctuary Choir and Orchestra

We are pleased to have Dr. Jon Remley directing the music today
in the absence of the minister of music.

O worship the King, all glorious above! And gratefully sing His wonderful love;

*Our Shield and Defender, the Ancient of Days,
pavilioned in splendor and girded with praise.*

*O tell of His might, O sing of His grace, Whose robe is the light, Whose canopy space!
His chariots of wrath the deep thunderclouds form,
and dark is His path on the wings of the storm.*

*Thy bountiful care what tongue can recite? It breathes in the air, it shines in the light,
It streams from the hills, it descends to the plain, and sweetly distills in the dew and the rain.
Frail children of dust, and feeble as frail, In Thee do we trust, nor find Thee to fail;
Thy mercies how tender, how firm to the end, Our Maker, Defender, Redeemer, and Friend.*

Sermon: "Where Real Joy Comes From" Pastor

Hymn of Commitment No. 330: "Amazing Grace! How Sweet the Sound" NEW BRITIAN

Offertory Prayer 8:30, Kevin Wade; 11:00, Kent McLeod

Offertory: Dawson Orchestra

Introduction of New Members

Call to Service: "Jesus Is Lord of All"

*Jesus is Lord of all, Jesus is Lord of all,
Lord of my thoughts and my service each day,
Jesus is Lord of all.*

Postlude: "Fanfares" Mouret

Dianne Norton, Organist

Lynda Little, Pianist

Bible Memory Verse for October

Romans 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking,
but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

All Belong!

**“... that there may be no dissension within
the body, but the members may have
the same care for one another”**

(1 Cor. 12:25 NRSV).

What an amusing picture is portrayed by the parts of the body arguing with each other! The foot thinks it doesn't belong because it is not a hand. The ear is upset because it is not an eye. That's crazy! Imagine the body as all eye, unable to hear or all ear, unable to smell. Paul draws a powerful image of the church as body. He portrays the need for a sense of belonging and unity in the body.

Yet, we know the foot-and-ear argument. It happens around budget time in the church year. Do we pay for the furnace, or sit in the cold and give to mission? Placing these two needs in opposition makes as much sense as the ear arguing itself out of the body because it is

not an eye. Both belong in the body.

The church is not all ear or eye or foot. Each has concern for the well being of the other and each is a gift to the other. In the giving and receiving of different gifts, the parts become “partners,” working together toward the benefit of the whole.

The mission of the church means seeing the church as more



than just “us”! The image of the body is a reminder that all the parts belong. Mission is not “us” and “them,” one part giving while another receives. Giving and receiving as partners around the world is vital to our life as a

church. In partnership with many others, we share in God’s caring action for creation.

As you consider your response to share your financial gifts with partners around the world, the giving chart below may be of help to you.



WEEKLY PERCENTAGE GIVING GUIDE

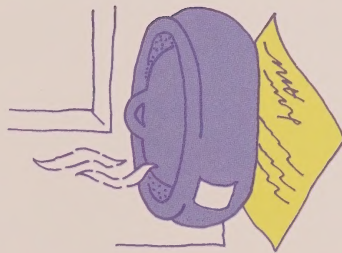
Annual Income	Weekly Income	Weekly Giving if Percentage is:					
		2.5%	5%	7.5%	10%	12.5%	15%
\$5,200	\$100	2.50	5.00	7.50	10.00	12.50	15.00
6,500	125	3.13	6.25	9.38	12.50	15.63	18.75
7,800	150	3.75	7.50	11.25	15.00	18.75	22.50
9,100	175	4.38	8.75	13.13	17.50	21.88	26.25
10,400	200	5.00	10.00	15.00	20.00	25.00	30.00
11,700	225	5.63	11.25	16.88	22.50	28.10	33.75
13,000	250	6.25	12.50	18.75	25.00	31.25	37.50
14,300	275	6.88	13.75	20.63	27.50	34.38	41.25
15,600	300	7.50	15.00	22.50	30.00	37.50	45.00
16,900	325	8.13	16.25	24.38	32.50	40.63	48.75
18,200	350	8.75	17.50	26.25	35.00	43.75	52.50
19,500	375	9.38	18.75	28.13	37.50	46.88	56.25
20,800	400	10.00	20.00	30.00	40.00	50.00	60.00
26,000	500	12.50	25.00	37.50	50.00	62.50	75.00
31,200	600	15.00	30.00	45.00	60.00	75.00	90.00
36,400	700	17.50	35.00	52.50	70.00	87.50	105.00
41,600	800	20.00	40.00	60.00	80.00	100.00	120.00
46,800	900	22.50	45.00	67.50	90.00	112.50	135.00
52,000	1,000	25.00	50.00	75.00	100.00	125.00	150.00
62,500	1,200	30.00	60.00	90.00	120.00	150.00	180.00
72,800	1,400	35.00	70.00	105.00	140.00	175.00	210.00
83,200	1,600	40.00	80.00	120.00	160.00	200.00	240.00
93,000	1,800	45.00	90.00	135.00	180.00	225.00	270.00
104,000	2,000	50.00	100.00	150.00	200.00	250.00	300.00

To determine yearly giving multiply weekly giving by 52



The Bread Pudding Gift

"Freely you have received, freely give" (Matt. 10:8b NIV).



Impacted wisdom teeth . . . three of them . . . they had to be removed. Eating or working would be difficult. I went home to bed and the doorbell rang! I didn't want to see anyone, or worse, have them see me. I answered the door only to find the perpetrator had departed. On the porch was a warm casserole dish and a note:

"Thought you might be hungry. Here is a bread pudding, my grandmother's recipe. Love, Audrey."

That pudding sustained me for two days. My friend didn't even wait at the door for mumbled thanks. It was a gift, freely given and freely received.

Jesus sent out the disciples with a mission to share what he had shared with them. He asked them to go on their journey, trusting in

the goodness and kindness of others (Matt. 10:8b). His vision was to connect people with each other in respect and care.

That's a different attitude than "what's-in-it-for-me?" Much of our giving is tied up with getting something back. How fearful we are to let generosity soar!

Much of our receiving is tied up with calculation about repaying an obligation. How reluctant we are to rejoice in the growth of friendship and community created by sharing!

In a world blessed with the generous self-giving of God, how can we think of paying God back? Rejoice in the freedom of receiving what God has given. Give freely to share in God's work of loving this creation to wholeness and life.

Freely Receive...Freely Give
Matthew 10:8b (NIV)



Freely Receive... Freely Give

Matthew 10:8b (NIV)

"To Jesus!"

**"It is like yeast that a woman took
and mixed in with three measures
of flour until all of it was leavened"**

(Luke 13:21 NRSV).

The children placed their offerings in the basket on a Sunday morning. A leader noticed that a young girl made a drawing upon her offering envelope. It was the drawing of a face and below were the words: "To Jesus." Did she think her money went directly to Jesus? The leader could have talked with the child to clarify what her offering was used for. As she thought about starting the conversation, she realized that this

child saw the relationship between giving and sharing in the ministry of Jesus. The conversation no longer seemed necessary

...

She was poor all her life. At the age of 90, she received an unexpected inheritance. She smiled when she told the story of being able to make a gift to a church where she had not been involved for many years. Yet, she had never forgotten how they provided shoes for her children one desperate winter long ago. She gave a gift to make the church building more accessible. She could have done many other things with this windfall, but the kindness she received and the sharing way she lived brought joy in being able to give

...

He's a busy medical doctor, committed to the church. Still, some were amazed that this man responded to the need for volun-



teers to supervise children in a special Sunday school project. He could have said that his children were now adults. He could have said that he had no training in this work. He could have said that someone else with more time should be with children, but he gave himself instead

Churches are full of stories of giving. Giving celebrates the caring action of God. Our stories are part of God’s loving story for the world. Our gifts to the church open possibilities for new stories to be told.

The giving chart below may be of help to you as you consider your financial gift to your church.

WEEKLY PERCENTAGE GIVING GUIDE

Annual Income	Weekly Income	Weekly Giving if Percentage is:					
		2.5%	5%	7.5%	10%	12.5%	15%
\$5,200	\$100	2.50	5.00	7.50	10.00	12.50	15.00
6,500	125	3.13	6.25	9.38	12.50	15.63	18.75
7,800	150	3.75	7.50	11.25	15.00	18.75	22.50
9,100	175	4.38	8.75	13.13	17.50	21.88	26.25
10,400	200	5.00	10.00	15.00	20.00	25.00	30.00
11,700	225	5.63	11.25	16.88	22.50	28.10	33.75
13,000	250	6.25	12.50	18.75	25.00	31.25	37.50
14,300	275	6.88	13.75	20.63	27.50	34.38	41.25
15,600	300	7.50	15.00	22.50	30.00	37.50	45.00
16,900	325	8.13	16.25	24.38	32.50	40.63	48.75
18,200	350	8.75	17.50	26.25	35.00	43.75	52.50
19,500	375	9.38	18.75	28.13	37.50	46.88	56.25
20,800	400	10.00	20.00	30.00	40.00	50.00	60.00
26,000	500	12.50	25.00	37.50	50.00	62.50	75.00
31,200	600	15.00	30.00	45.00	60.00	75.00	90.00
36,400	700	17.50	35.00	52.50	70.00	87.50	105.00
41,600	800	20.00	40.00	60.00	80.00	100.00	120.00
46,800	900	22.50	45.00	67.50	90.00	112.50	135.00
52,000	1,000	25.00	50.00	75.00	100.00	125.00	150.00
62,500	1,200	30.00	60.00	90.00	120.00	150.00	180.00
72,800	1,400	35.00	70.00	105.00	140.00	175.00	210.00
83,200	1,600	40.00	80.00	120.00	160.00	200.00	240.00
93,000	1,800	45.00	90.00	135.00	180.00	225.00	270.00
104,000	2,000	50.00	100.00	150.00	200.00	250.00	300.00

To determine yearly giving multiply weekly giving by 52



Intentional Response

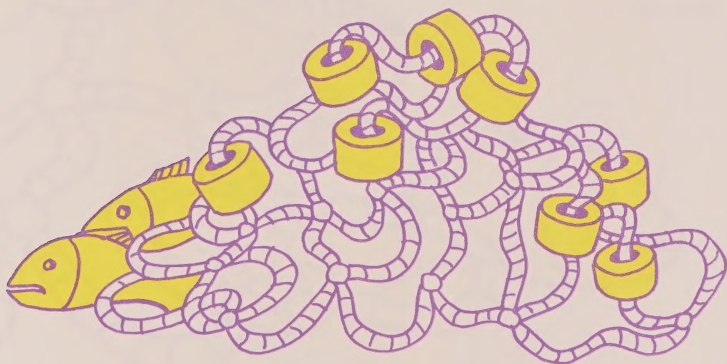
“... and immediately, they left their nets
and followed him”

(Mark 1:18 NRSV).

Can it be a true gift if it is planned? Like the disciples leaving their nets to follow Jesus, isn't there supposed to be something spontaneous in our response? An impulse takes hold and we respond with giving. So we wait for the right moment, a moment of inspiration when the gift flows forth from us. That is one kind of gift, but most needs in our world

cannot wait until we feel moved to respond. There is more to giving than responding on impulse.

We know this through our faith, which leads us to a deeper awareness of God's presence and action—an awareness that changes how we live. Giving is an intentional way of expressing faith throughout life. When those fishing folk of Galilee left their old

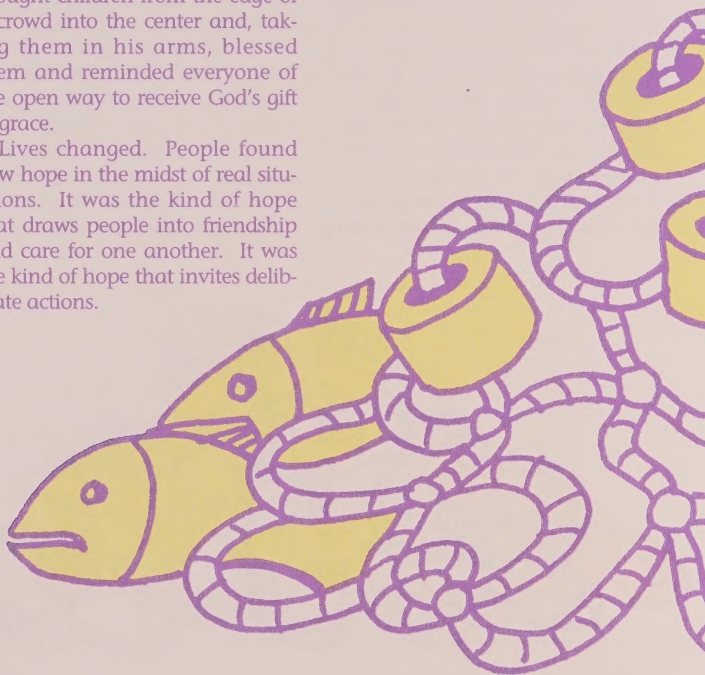


way of life to begin a journey with Jesus, they opened their lives to a new purpose. In Jesus, they met one whose words were backed with action.

Jesus was intentional in the way he proclaimed the love of God. Facing the opposition of some Pharisees, he reached out and healed on the Sabbath. He spoke with the Samaritan woman when no one else would have anything to do with her. He brought children from the edge of a crowd into the center and, taking them in his arms, blessed them and reminded everyone of the open way to receive God's gift of grace.

Lives changed. People found new hope in the midst of real situations. It was the kind of hope that draws people into friendship and care for one another. It was the kind of hope that invites deliberate actions.

Planned giving represents intentional efforts to express one's faith. Bequests by will or other planned gifts link the community of the present with the community of the future. Such gifts brighten the future with hope and support possibilities that we could not even imagine at this time. Intentional response points beyond ourselves and our time.



Love and Harmony

**"O come, let us sing to the Lord;
let us make a joyful noise to
the rock of our salvation"**

(Psalm 95:1 NRSV).

A consumer based lifestyle is out of tune with earth, air, and water. We hear the discordant sounds of dying sea birds covered with illegally discharged oil. We hear the

fading echoes of animal and plant species destroyed for economic development that make the world poorer still.

We are not in harmony with

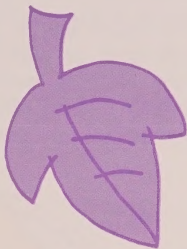


each other. We carve up the land with borders and label people as “us” and “them.” Some shout and some whisper and many have no voice at all.

Harmony happens as we bring ourselves into caring relationship with each other and with all creation. In the Bible, we are told that the glue that holds the many different parts together is love. To sing in harmony is to be sensitive to the music and the singers, to make room for each other, and to discover ways of being together in mutual respect.

Harmony requires intentional effort. We need to learn how to sing a new song together. Meanwhile, new generations are waiting to hear a song that proclaims concern for their future.

Love for God means loving the world God cares deeply about. This love has the power to lead us to change and commitment when it is given priority. To live in harmony with creation calls for decisions based on love—decisions that change the discordant notes into a new song of hope.





9/26/94

	Month <u>Total \$</u>	Average \$ <u>per week</u>	Monthly \$	Attendance	Per Person <u>Average</u>
Avg.wkly.		1004	5355	630	8
Median		1194			
Jan	6414	1069		672	10
Feb	5137	1027		591	9
Mar	5033	1007		600	8
Apr	4549	910		637	7
May	6102	1017		628	10
Jun	5533	1107		626	9
Jul	5620	937		739	8
Aug	4581	916		587	8
Sep	5223	1045		591	9
May-Sep	27059	1002		3171	9

Avg.att. x
avg.give
 5355

CMCC 1995 BUDGET WORKSHEET

<u>BUDGET ITEM</u>	<u>MTHY</u> <u>BUD</u> <u>*exp</u>	<u>1994</u> <u>YTD</u> <u>AVG</u>	<u>1993</u> <u>AVG</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>	<u>BASE</u> <u>BUDGET</u>	<u>EXP.</u> <u>BUD.</u>	<u>EXP.</u> <u>ORD.</u>
RENT	\$75	n/a		the rent item we have now is the \$65 month mini-warehouse			
WORSHIP SUPPLIES	\$30	\$33	\$27	candles, wafers, juice, visitor cards, copy paper for bulletins (colored), cleaning altar cloths, minor items			
MUSIC MATERIAL	\$15	\$25	\$14	routine music purchase, copyright fees <i>SPECIAL - COPYRIGHT, HYMNAL, SPECIAL PROD. MUSIC,</i>			
SPECIAL PROGRAMS	*	\$60		drama, special production music , retreat, other special projects,			
MAINTENANCE	\$75	\$52	n/a	semi-annual carpet cleaning, tuning piano & organ, minor equipment, repairs, cleaning supplies (not covered in Fellowship),			
UTILITIES	\$685	so far \$664	n/a	actually the rent - electric, gas & water for the two buildings			
TELEPHONE	\$75	\$68	\$70	basic phone plus pastor's long distance calls			
ADMIN. SUPPLIES	\$30	\$28	\$20	basic office supplies, copier paper (not charged to Worship or Newsletter)			
POSTAGE	\$10	\$20	\$20	admin. postage, church business (not included in Newsletter or Deacon's			
INSURANCE	\$40		\$48	contents, liability, some medical			
BANK CHARGES	\$5	\$2	\$12	bank charges & fees			

<u>BUDGET ITEM</u>	<u>MTHY</u> <u>BUD</u> <u>*exp</u>	<u>1994</u> <u>YTD</u> <u>AVG</u>	<u>1993</u> <u>AVG</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>	<u>BASE</u> <u>BUDGET</u>	<u>EXP.</u> <u>BUD.</u>	<u>EXP.</u> <u>ORD.</u>
EVANGELISM	\$50 plus *	\$96	\$57	concerts - all expenses (ad, travel, food, per diem, posters, flyers) outreach - Pride events, cards, posters special speakers			
REGULAR ADVERTISEMENTS	\$36	\$36	\$36	ad in 'Forum' & other <i>SPECIAL ADS</i>			
BAO CONTRIB.	*	\$80		contrib. if budget allows			
CAF CONTRIB (to savings)	*	spent \$117	spent \$132	contrib. if budget allows			
1917 CLINIC CONTRIB.	*	\$80		contrib. if budget allows			
COMM. INFO LINE CONTRIB.	*	\$25		contrib. if budget allows			
OTHER CONTRIB.	*			contrib. if budget allows			
FAMILYSHIP	\$50 plus *	\$74	\$48	potluck, kitchen supplies, fun nite, special food items			
NEWSLETTER	\$30	\$54	\$48	paper, postage			
DEACON'S FUND	\$30	\$30	\$9	letters, cards, postage, supplies			
MEMORIALS	*	\$6	\$30	flowers if budget allows			
SUN. SCH.	*	\$1	\$8	sun. sch. supplies, books			
BIBLE STDY	\$10	\$4	\$5	bible study supplies, books			
STUDY COURSES	\$10	\$6	\$15	supplies, paper, books			
INQUIRER CLASS	\$25	\$8	\$12	phamplets, food,			
YOUTH MINISTRIES	*	\$29		supplies, books			
<i>CHILDREN'S CH.</i>	<i>\$5</i>						

<u>BUDGET ITEM</u>	<u>MTHY</u> <u>BUD</u> <u>*exp</u>	<u>1994</u> <u>YTD</u> <u>AVG</u>	<u>1993</u> <u>AVG</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>	<u>BASE</u> <u>BUDGET</u>	<u>EXP.</u> <u>BUD.</u>	<u>EXP.</u> <u>ORD.</u>
DIST. CONF. CONTR. (to savings)	\$50 plus *	spent \$100	spent \$104	lay delegate(s) savings fund			
GEN. CONF. CONTR. (to savings)	\$50 plus *	\$0	\$40	savings fund for lay delegate(s) & pastor			
SCHLRSHIP CONTRIB (to savings)	*	spent \$1	spent \$163	savings for needy student clergy			
COPIER CONTR (to savings)	\$50	spent \$75	spent \$25	savings for annual copier contract	\$		
BLDG. FND. CONTR. (to savings)	*			savings	\$		
CAP. EQUIP. CONTR. (to savings)	*	spent \$94	spent \$56	savings for major equipment items	\$		
ANNIV. CONTR. (to savings)	*	spent \$83	spent \$124	savings for annual event total expenses - travel, ads, flyers, honorariums, per diem	\$:		
PENSION FUND	\$80		\$55	quarterly contrib. \$.75 per member per month	:		
UFMCC TITHE	\$414	\$536	\$481	monthly 10% of gross	:		
GLAD TITHE	\$207	\$268	\$240	monthly 5% of gross	:		
PASTOR COMP. housing travel insurance compensation conferences (to savings) retirement fund & disability ins.	\$1125			N/T allowance paid to pastor N/T allowance paid to pastor paid direct to suppliers paid direct to pastor savings for conferences pay to fund manager(s)	 : : : : : :		
ASSOC. PASTOR	\$478			comp			
MUSIC STAFF <i>HONORARIA</i>	\$217			honorarium for musician(s)			
ADMIN ASSIST	\$150			comp - month			
CUSTODIAL				comp - \$25 wk			

COVENANT METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH
3001 4th AVENUE SOUTH
BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA 35205
(205)326-8529

CLIFF MORRISON, PASTOR

December 29, 1992

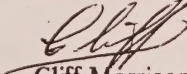
Dear Members and Friends,

This letter is your official, "in writing" notification of our upcoming **Congregational Meeting** which will be held on **Sunday, January 10, 1993** at 2:00 P.M. following one of our famous "pot luck" dinners. Among the many important items on the agenda are the approval of our budget for 1993 (a copy of the proposal is enclosed), the election of two people to the Board of Directors, a discussion of and voting on proposed amendments to our church by-laws, and congregational adoption of our proposed new Mission Statement (also enclosed).

I need to remind you that many of you have not yet turned in your pledge forms for the coming year. There is a copy enclosed for your convenience. Please, if you have not already done so, fill it out and mail it to the church or bring it with you on January 10. Covenant MCC is already experiencing major growth and that is expected to continue as we have never seen it before. But in order to meet the demands of that growth, the church needs your personal commitment of time and monetary tithing.

Please study the enclosed budget proposal and the new Mission Statement and be in prayer about these things as well as your personal commitment to CMCC. God is calling our church to greater work in the name of Jesus Christ than we have ever done before. I am urging you to be an active part in this glorious task.

Love in Christ,



Cliff Morrison, Pastor

P.S. You will note that two different versions of the proposed 1993 budget are enclosed. Each reflects only minor differences from the other and a final version will be presented at the congregational meeting.



COVENANT METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH
Pledge Card - 1995

I estimate my 1995 **REGULAR BUDGET** giving will be:

\$_____ per month.

Over and above the regular budget, I estimate my additional gifts to the **BUILDING FUND** will be:

\$_____ per month.

I am a - ____member ____friend ____regular visitor ____other

NAME_____ PHONE_____

ADDRESS_____ APT_____

CITY_____ ZIP_____



COVENANT METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH
Pledge Card - 1995

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I am a - ____member ____friend ____regular visitor ____other

NAME_____ PHONE_____

ADDRESS_____ APT_____

CITY_____ ZIP_____



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I am a - ____member ____friend ____regular visitor ____other

NAME_____ PHONE_____

ADDRESS_____ APT_____

CITY_____ ZIP_____

PRICE LIST

1994 STEWARDSHIP THEME MATERIALS

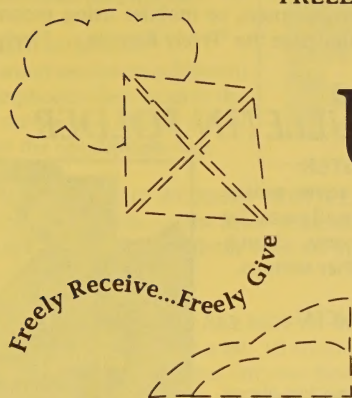
"FREELY RECEIVE--FREELY GIVE"

CC5-501798	Introductory Sample Pack.	\$2.95
CC5-501674	Poster. \$0.75 each, 3/\$2.10	
CC5-501787	Commitment Pledge Card. 100/\$5.00, 500/\$22.50, 1000/\$41.00	
CC5-501754	Letterhead. 100/\$5.75, 500/\$26.50, 1000/\$48.00	
CC5-501765	#10 Envelope. 100/\$7.00, 500/\$32.00, 1000/\$58.00	
CC5-501685	Bulletin. 100/6.00, 500/\$27.00, 1000/\$49.00	
CC5-501696	Leaflet #1: So Much Trust(giving chart). 100/\$4.00, 500/\$18.00, 1000/\$33.00	
CC5-501708	Leaflet #2: To Jesus?(giving chart). 100/\$4.00, 500/\$18.00, 1000/\$33.00	
CC5-501710	Leaflet #3: All Belong(giving chart). 100/\$4.00, 500/\$18.00, 1000/\$33.00	
CC5-501721	Leaflet #4: Intentional Response?. 100/\$4.00, 500/\$18.00, 1000/\$33.00	
CC5-501732	Leaflet #5: Love and Harmony. 100/\$4.00, 500/\$18.00, 1000/\$33.00	
CC5-501743	Book/Biblemark. 100/\$10.00, 500/\$46.00, 1000/\$85.00	

Postage is extra.

1994 STEWARDSHIP THEME MATERIALS

"FREELY RECEIVE . . . FREELY GIVE"



USER'S GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

The Stewardship Theme Materials for 1994 are based on the theme "FREELY RECEIVE . . . FREELY GIVE." The primary Scripture text, "Freely you have received, freely give," is found in Matthew 10:8b (NIV). It is part of the Scripture that relates Jesus' sending of the twelve disciples to the "lost sheep of Israel" to proclaim the good news of his coming. As they go, they are to heal the sick, cleanse lepers, raise the dead, and cast out demons. They are to minister in the context of community.

The concept of community connecting people with one another in respect and care is developed in the stewardship theme materials. The bulletin folder, based on the theme Scripture, tells of a gift given and received in love. "It was a gift, freely given and freely received."

The theme is further developed in five bulletin inserts, using other Scriptures:

1 Peter 4:10 (NRSV),

"Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received." The bulletin insert, *So Much Trust!*, offers a challenge to see that "Gifts from God are never just for us! Through our giving, hope becomes real for others." The giving chart is included in this insert.

Luke 13:21 (NRSV),

"It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened." This bulletin insert, *To Jesus*, tells three stories of giving that are illustrative of thousands of stories that come out of local

congregations, stories that can be told from experiences in your congregation. "Giving celebrates the caring action of God. Our stories are part of God's loving story for the world. Our gifts to the church open possibilities for new stories to be told." The giving chart is included.

1 Corinthians 12:25 (NRSV),

"... that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another." The insert, *All Belong!*, presents a discussion by the parts of the body about the importance of one part over the other. Paul concludes that each is important to the body functioning as a unit. He then relates this powerful image to the church as body. The bulletin insert tells us that "The church is not all ear or eye or foot In the giving and receiving of different gifts, the parts become 'partners,' working together toward the benefit of the whole." The giving chart is included.

Mark 1:18 (NRSV),

"... and immediately, they left their nets and followed him." In this insert, *Intentional Response*, the question is asked, "Can it be a true gift if it is planned?"

Like the disciples leaving their nets to follow Jesus, isn't there supposed to be something spontaneous in our response?" The need for more than one kind of giving—including the need to consider one's will and estate—is included in this planned giving emphasis.

Psalms 95:1 (NRSV),

"O come, let us sing to the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation." The statement, "A consumer based lifestyle is out of tune with earth, air, and water," opens the exploration of *Love and Harmony* the bulletin insert that emphasizes our care for God's creation. "To live in harmony with creation calls for decisions based on love—decisions that change the discordant notes into a new song of hope."

The theme **FREELY RECEIVE . . . FREELY GIVE** invites us to explore receiving and giving from the heart in the spirit of freedom, lightness, and joy. This is illustrated in the poster art by a brightly colored kite floating above the earth. The use of quilt art is a reminder of the stewardship of time, ability, and commitment. Copy on the bulletin folder states, "Much of our receiving is tied up with calculation about repayment and obligation. . . . In a world blessed with the generous self-giving of God, how can we think of paying God back? Rejoice in the freedom of receiving what God has given. Give freely to share in God's work of loving this creation to wholeness and life."

The 1994 stewardship theme materials include: poster, bulletin folder, five bulletin inserts, book/Biblemark, letter-head, #10 envelope, and commitment (pledge) card.

[NOTE: All items may not be available from your denomination's stewardship office.]

THE MATERIALS—and some ideas for using them!

POSTER

POST IT:

Display the poster during your time of stewardship emphasis or commitment enlistment. Place posters on doors, walls, charts, bulletin boards, portable room dividers, stage curtains, and other suitable spots. You'll need several for high-traffic areas. This poster is suitable for many uses through the year, not just at the time of financial commitment.



MOUNT IT:

Mount posters on cardboard and place on tables, windowsills, and chalkboard trays.

CREATE A BANNER:

Mount posters back-to-back and suspend them from the ceiling in your fellowship hall or foyer for a festive setting. Invite your youth group, or someone who likes to experiment, to create a felt or other cloth banner.

CREATE A MOBILE:

Children, youth, and/or adults can mount posters back-to-back and construct colorful mobiles for your fellowship hall, foyer, church office, or classrooms. Make your own colorful kites with "Freely Receive . . . Freely Give" tails for

mobiles or to suspend from ceilings at strategic points in your church.

CREATE A DIFFERENT POSTER OR MOBILE:

Children, youth, and/or adults can create their own original posters, banners, or mobiles using materials or symbols that illustrate the "Freely Receive . . . Freely Give" theme.

BULLETIN FOLDER

USE AS A POSTER:

The front cover makes an excellent small poster for use in classrooms, church offices, and other settings.

USE IN FINANCIAL CAMPAIGN:

Print information about the financial campaign on the bulletin folder and put the materials to be taken to each home inside the folder.



USE IN A "FREELY RECEIVE . . . FREELY GIVE TALENT SEARCH" OF YOUR CONGREGATION:

Write brief descriptions of the various opportunities for service and put the descriptions inside the bulletin folder along with a commitment form. Take the packets to homes, give to new members, use at a "FREELY RECEIVE . . . FREELY GIVE Talent Search" potluck supper, or use in other appropriate situations. Leave space for the recipient to write in other talents they have that are not included in one of the descriptions and how they might give of these talents for others.

BULLETIN INSERTS

(A series of five):

So Much Trust! (1 Pet. 4:10 NRSV)
(includes the giving chart)

To Jesus (Luke 13:21 NRSV)
(includes the giving chart)

All Belong! (1 Cor. 12-25 NRSV)
(includes the giving chart)

Intentional Response (Mark 1:18 NRSV)

Love and Harmony (Ps. 95:1 NRSV)



(Continued on page 3)

SHARE THEM:

Include them in bulletins, church newsletters, and correspondence with homebound and non-resident church members and friends.

SPEAK THE MESSAGE:

Each insert centers on a different focus. Emphasize that focus in the worship service and church school classes on the appropriate day.

INTEGRATE INTO THE WORSHIP SERVICE:

Use a sermon title that is the same or similar to the title of the insert. Refer to the bulletin insert in the sermon to reinforce the connection.

SHARE WITH THOSE WHO ARE NOT AT WORSHIP:

Bulletin inserts will fit into a No. 10 envelope for mailing. Why not use up the extras left over from Sunday to mail to persons who were not present? Include them in church newsletters and correspondence with homebound and non-resident church members and friends.

DISCUSSION STARTERS:

Inserts can be used as a discussion starter in a Sunday school class, youth meeting, or other setting.

BOOK/BIBLEMARK

USE IT!:

Whether at a Scripture passage that is especially meaningful or in a book you are currently reading, use the book/Biblemark to keep your place.

MAIL IT:

The book/Biblemark fits into a No. 10 envelope. Enclose one with financial statements sent to members of your congregation. Include one with the church newsletter when it is mailed.

MAKE IT THE FOCUS OF A CHILDREN'S SERMON:

Give a book/Biblemark to each child at the close of a children's sermon. Or at the close of a children's sermon, have the children distribute the book/Biblemarks to the congregation. Talk about gifts that have been received and how the gifts can be shared.

TAKE TO PERSONS WHO ARE CONFINED:

Take a book/Biblemark when you visit someone in the hospital or who is confined at home, in a nursing home, or



in some other setting. Include with it a book of poems, Scripture, and/or writings that might be helpful to the person being visited. This could be a project for a Sunday School class or youth group. What else could you take or do that would illustrate the theme "Freely Receive . . . Freely Give"?

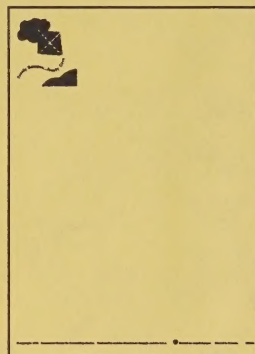
LETTERHEAD

EMPHASIZE THE THEME:

Use the letterhead instead of the church's regular letterhead for church mailings during the stewardship emphasis season.

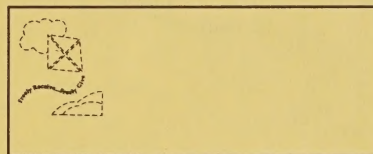
USE AS A TEACHING TOOL:

Help people recognize stewardship of time and talent by using the letterhead for thank you letters to people who have served the church or for congratulatory letters to people celebrating achievements. Use it to write a thank you letter to every giver in the congregation.



NO. 10 ENVELOPE

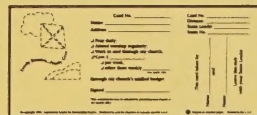
Use the envelope with the letterhead for all of the above. Also, use it to mail annual, quarterly, or monthly statements of giving.



COMMITMENT (PLEDGE) CARD

MAKE HOME VISITS:

Present a card to each household as part of a visit by a trained team.

**PROVIDE A DEDICATION SERVICE:**

When the completed cards are returned, have a commitment time during the worship service. The cards can be 1) distributed during a stewardship commitment worship service to be filled out and dedicated during the service (a sample can be mailed ahead of time along with a letter so



worshippers will be acquainted with the card); 2) mailed ahead of time and brought to the service by worshippers; 3) brought forward by ushers if a campaign has been conducted and cards have already been collected; or 4) used with another enlistment method. The important thing is to have the worshippers feel that their decisions to "Freely Receive . . . Freely Give" with reference to commitments of time, talents, life-style, money, are dedicated to God.

INCLUDE WITH THE RECEIVING OF NEW MEMBERS:

Make the giving of oneself a part of discipleship classes. At the time new members are received, give a card to each person joining the church.

PROJECT SUGGESTIONS

HOMEBOUND PROJECT:

Ask those who are homebound to clip newspaper or magazine articles, headlines, or pictures that illustrate "Freely Receive . . . Freely Give" situations. Use some of them in an on-going NEWSLETTER COLUMN entitled "Freely Receive . . . Freely Give".

BULLETIN BOARD:

Set up a bulletin board with the caption *Freely Receive . . . Freely Give*. Put on it the clippings and pictures that have come from the homebound project. Contributions could also come from youth groups, Sunday school classes, the personal experiences of individuals, etc.

ESTATE AND FINANCIAL PLANNING CLINIC:

Check with your denomination's national office to get the name of someone who might lead an estate and financial planning clinic for your church or for a group of churches in your region.

HAVE A KITE-A-THON:

Have a kite flying contest with sponsors donating a certain amount for each foot the flyer's kite flies above the ground. A lot of estimating may be necessary! Encourage participants to make their own kites using the theme or to decorate commercially made kites with the theme. This could be an activity done prior to the following intergenerational night.

"FREELY RECEIVE . . . FREELY GIVE" INTERGENERATIONAL NIGHT:

Ask church school classes of all ages, youth groups, adult groups, etc., to write down a stewardship situation in which "Freely Receive . . . Freely Give" situations are illustrated. Encourage looking within your own church fellowship for illustrations. These situations can be financial, ecological, relational, or can involve other areas. The situation ideas can be used just as they come from the groups or a person can be assigned to receive them to

consolidate and eliminate duplicate ideas.

Plan a soup-and-sandwich fellowship supper, followed by a time of exploring ideas that have come from the various church groups and celebrating how God's gifts have been shared. Those attending the supper can be divided into small groups or the group can stay together. If small groups are formed, be sure they are intergenerational. The situation ideas can be placed in a container and drawn out by participants or a representative of each small group, or they can be divided up and assigned to small groups.

During a time of closing worship and celebration, have the written situations brought forward and tacked or taped to a bulletin board that is part of a worship center. The worship center could be a cross, a kite, or other symbol you might choose, and a Bible open to Matt. 10:8b. The idea expressed on the bulletin cover, "Rejoice in the freedom of receiving what God has given. Give freely to share in God's work of loving this creation to wholeness and life," could be incorporated into the worship celebration.

EVALUATION

The members of the theme design committee want to be helpful partners with you in nurturing stewards in your congregation. Your evaluation of these materials helps us do a better job.

Consider these questions:

1. What worked best with these theme materials?
2. What could have been improved?
3. What creative uses did your congregation add to these ideas?
4. Anything else?

Please mail your evaluation to:

Ecumenical Center for Stewardship Studies
1100 West 42nd Street, Suite 225
Indianapolis, IN 46208

Thanks for sharing your journey with us.

The 1994 Stewardship Theme Committee:
Barbara Dunlap-Berg, *The United Methodist Church*, chair
Chris Stockwell-Goering, *United Church of Christ*
Richard L. Husfloen, *Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada*
Ronald E. Vallet, *Ecumenical Center for Stewardship Studies*

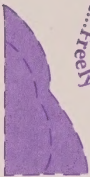
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☐ Work in and through my church;

☐ *Give \$ _____,

☐ per week,

☐ other than weekly _____

mo. quart. ann.

through my church's unified budget

Signed _____

*This commitment may be adjusted by presenting your request to the church office.

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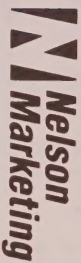


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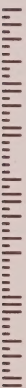
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Freely Receive...Freely Give

Rejoice in the freedom of
receiving what God has given.
Give freely to share in God's
work of loving this creation to
wholeness and life.

**“Freely you have
received,
freely give.”**

(Matthew 10:8b NIV)

COVENANT METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH

OF BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA

PERSONAL COMMITMENT

God has created many avenues for us to have a two-way relationship. I am free to talk with God, to listen to God, to receive guidance, inspiration, relational, and material blessings, and am free to respond in like ways.

Further, the Church has been created as the place where the living Body may come together to unite vision and the collective presence and power of God in each of our lives, to share the abundance of goods with those in need, and to provide sanctuary to the weary and ill of heart, soul, and mind, and body. I want to be a part of the ministry as it unfolds here at Covenant Metropolitan Community church.

The things that I can do here to better the lives of others are as simple as helping to clean and maintain the church property and as complex as contributing professional expertise in many areas.

To this church, I will give of my loving labor, will contribute my talents and gifts as they are needed, and will tithe of my monthly income to further the ministry of the church. I understand the work of the church is the minister to those seeking God, both those who are already here, and those who have yet to find us.

As a member of this branch of God's family, I accept that there will be days when the family will need to "carry" me — in prayer, for emotional, spiritual, social, intellectual and physical needs. I know, too, that I will be called on to "carry" others and that this mutual support is foundational to all of us.

My Commitment to Covenant Metropolitan Community Church

My hobbies and skills that I dedicate to the church are as follows: _____

My gifts of the Holy Spirit are: _____

I pledge _____ hours monthly of my loving labor to the church.

I will tithe \$ _____ monthly to continue the work of CMCC.

Signature

Date

